

Exhibit 3

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

COALITION FOR TJ,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	Civil No. 1:21-cv-00296-CMH-JFA
)	
FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD,)	
)	
Defendant.)	

DECLARATION OF JEREMY SHUGHART

My name is Jeremy Shughart, and I certify that the following information is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

1. I am over the age of 18 and make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge.

2. I am employed by the Fairfax County School Board as the Director of Admissions for the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology ("TJ"). I have been employed in that position since July 2013. Prior to that position, I was employed by Fairfax County Public Schools ("FCPS") as the manager of the Office of Student Testing.

3. As the Director of Admissions for TJ, I oversee all aspects of the student selection and admissions process for that school. This includes leading the development and continued refinement of the online application process and assessment components, acting as the liaison with our participating jurisdictions, providing guidance on outreach, implementing any admissions changes, and coordinating the selection process for TJ student admissions.

4. FCPS periodically publishes a regulation, Regulation 3355, that describes the procedures for student selection and admission to TJ ("TJ Admissions Process"). The July 2018

revision of that Regulation, Regulation 3355.13, is attached as Exhibit A, and it accurately described the TJ Admissions Process that was used to select students entering TJ in the 2018-19, 2019-20, and 2020-21 school years. The TJ Admissions Process for students entering in Fall 2013 through Fall 2017 was described in earlier versions of Regulation 3355.

5. Since 2013, students have been selected for admission to TJ based on a holistic review of a number of qualitative and quantitative components. These components have been adjusted many times over the years. From Fall 2017 through Spring 2020, these components included an essay question; responses to a student information sheet; teacher recommendations; percentile ranks on math, reading & science assessment tests; grade point average; and math/science grade point average.

6. Until Fall 2017, the TJ Admissions Process included one standardized test—a Specialized High School Admissions Test that was customized by the test vendor (Pearson) exclusively for the TJ Admissions Process. When Pearson informed FCPS in early 2016 that it would discontinue that test after Fall 2016, FCPS undertook to select an alternative. After a lengthy and thorough evaluation and recommendation process, FCPS selected a combination of three tests from two different vendors: the ACT Aspire Reading, the ACT Aspire Science, and the Quant-Q as a mathematics assessment.

7. FCPS began using those three tests as part of the TJ Admissions process in the 2017-18 school year. That was the first time that a science assessment was used as part of the TJ Admissions process.

8. Before changes to the TJ admission policy were adopted by the Fairfax County School Board in October and December 2020, the TJ Admissions Process took five to six months to complete.

- a. Under that process, an application window opened for four weeks starting in early September and closing in late September or early October.
- b. Applicants who paid the application fee and met the eligibility criteria (8th-grade students residing in Fairfax County or another participating jurisdiction, enrolled in or already completed Algebra I, and having a 3.0 GPA in the core academic subjects at the end of 7th grade final marks and 8th-grade 1st-quarter marks) were administered the ACT Aspire Reading, the ACT Aspire Science, and the Quant-Q tests around the second week of November. The ACT Aspire Reading and Science tests were administered during a national testing window established by the exam vendor, which window typically closed in mid- to late November of each year. FCPS administered the Quant-Q exam, which constituted the math assessment, at the same time as the two ACT Aspire tests.
- c. After FCPS received the results of the ACT Aspire and Quant-Q assessments in early January, the applicant pool was narrowed in mid-January to a “semifinalist” pool, consisting of those applicants who scored above certain percentile minimums on the three exams and who had continued to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA in their core academic courses.
- d. In early or mid-February, the semifinalists were administered a qualitative admissions exam, consisting of a proctored administration of the Student Information Sheet and a Problem-Solving Essay. Semifinalists also were required to obtain two teacher recommendations and submit them in late January or early February.

- e. A team of highly-qualified, trained educators then spent four to six weeks conducting a holistic review of the semifinalists' complete application portfolios.
- f. Admissions offers were made to students by no later than the end of April. This timeline allowed for unsuccessful applicants to meet the deadlines for course selection for FCPS high schools, and as well as the admissions timetables for most area private and parochial schools, which typically have late Spring deadlines for enrollment in the next school year.

9. As part of the school system's commitment to equitable access and opportunities for all students, the TJ Admissions Process is regularly reviewed to identify ways that the process can be improved to better serve the community, without diminishing the quality of education at the school and while remaining faithful to its mission "to provide students with a challenging learning environment focused on math, science, and technology, to inspire joy at the prospect of discovery, and to foster a culture of innovation based on ethical behavior and the shared interests of humanity."

10. In the Fall of 2020, the School Board modified the admissions process for TJ.
- a. On September 15, 2020, the Division Superintendent at a public work session proposed to the School Board to make multiple changes to the TJ Admissions Process—the Merit Lottery Proposal. Those changes included eliminating the application fee, the three standardized assessment tests, one qualitative assessment, and teacher recommendations, while raising the minimum GPA from 3.0 to 3.5 and using a lottery system to select among a pool of qualified applicants. Under the Merit Lottery Proposal, students would be placed in "Regional Pathways" based on the FCPS administrative region in which they

resided or their participating locality, and a lottery would be used to select students from each Regional Pathways. These “Regional Pathways” relied on the same five administrative Regions in which FCPS had been organized since 2014. Each Region would be allocated an equal number of seats (70), and set numbers of seats would also be allocated for each participating jurisdictions. Those changes were intended to enhance the pool of talented applicants, remove potential barriers that were keeping students from disadvantaged groups from applying or making it to the semifinalist rounds. Eliminating the application fee would remove a financial barrier that prevented some students from seeking admission. Eliminating the standardized admissions tests would remove a barrier that prevented many students from disadvantaged backgrounds from continuing to the qualitative-assessment portion of the admissions process. Eliminating teacher recommendations would remove the subjectivity that may have worked against applicants from disadvantaged groups. The School Board did not act on the Superintendent’s Merit Lottery Proposal on September 15, 2020.

- b. On October 6, 2020, the Superintendent presented a Revised Merit Lottery proposal to the School Board. That proposal modified the original proposal in two main ways: (1) instead of using a lottery for all seats, the highest-evaluated students would be offered the first 100 seats, and (2) another 400 students would be selected through the Regional Pathway lotteries, with each Region’s seats capped according to its proportion of overall student enrollment.
- c. The School Board discussed potential changes to the TJ admissions policy at a lengthy work session on October 6, 2020, but it did not accept either the

Superintendent's Merit Lottery or the Revised Merit Lottery proposals. Instead, it voted to eliminate the \$100 application fee and the standardized testing as part of the TJ Admissions Process. It also directed the Superintendent to increase the size of the admitted class from 480 students to 550—50 more seats than contemplated by the Superintendent's proposal. It did not decide the remaining components of the admissions process at that time. The School Board's decision on October 6 enabled us to forgo arranging the ACT Aspire and Insight Assessment (Quant-Q) testing that would ordinarily have been administered before the end of November.

- d. In November 2020, the Superintendent made two "final proposals" for the remaining components of the process. The "Hybrid Merit Lottery" proposal closely resembled the Revised Merit Lottery, except that it incorporated the School Board's directive to expand the TJ freshman class size to 550. Unlike the first three proposals, the "Holistic Approach" proposal would not use a lottery at all. Instead, 8th-graders applicants who met the eligibility criteria would be evaluated based on their performance on two qualitative assessments, and four "experience factors" would also be considered—namely, whether the student qualified for Free or Reduced-price Meals, was an English Language Learner, had an Individualized Education Plan, or attended a historically underrepresented school. Each of FCPS's five administrative Regions would be allocated a number of seats in the class, as would other participating school divisions, and applicants would be considered against other students attending schools in the same Region.

- e. The School Board met on December 7, 2020, to discuss both of the Superintendent's final proposals. It did not choose either of them.
- f. On December 17, 2020, the School Board met again. It voted to adopt some of the Superintendent's ideas but not others: the floor for eligibility would be raised by increasing the minimum unweighted GPA from 3.0 to 3.5; 8th-grade applicants would be required to be enrolled in a full-year honors Algebra I course or higher, an honors science course, and at least one other honors course or the Young Scholars program; teacher recommendations would not be required, students would be administered two qualitative assessments; and evaluators would consider the four experience factors of whether the student qualified for Free or Reduced-price Meals, was an English Language Learner, had an Individualized Education Plan, or attended a historically underrepresented school. Instead of capping the number of students admitted from each region, the School Board directed the Superintendent to ensure that each middle school would have seats equivalent to 1.5% of its 8th-grade class size, with seats offered in the first instance to the top applicants from that school. Even if each middle school's 1.5% allocation were completely filled, approximately 100 seats at TJ would remain to be allocated among private-school and home-schooled students, as well as other eligible students who ranked below the top 1.5% of applicants from their middle school.
- g. The 1.5%-plan was not proposed by the Superintendent, and our staff did not conduct any analysis to predict how the 1.5% plan would affect the racial makeup of students admitted to TJ under the new admissions process.

11. On April 28, 2021, the Superintendent promulgated Regulation 3355.14 to incorporate and implement the policy changes adopted by the School Board in revising the admissions policy for TJ. A true and accurate copy is attached as Exhibit B.

12. Starting in January 2021, my office conducted the TJ Admissions Process in accordance with the policy changes adopted by the School Board the previous October and December. The application window for 9th-grade admissions opened on February 1 and remained open through February 26, 2021. We administered the qualitative assessment portion on March 15, 2021, with a make-up date on April 12, 2021. Our admissions evaluators began reviewing candidates for admission on May 3, 2021. Students were notified about admission decisions on June 23, 2021. Students began classes on August 23, 2021.

13. Students were offered admission in accordance with the 1.5%-plan prescribed by the School Board. Under this plan, each public middle school was guaranteed a number of seats equivalent to 1.5% of its 8th-grade student population. At least 100 other unallocated seats were available to all eligible applicants from all schools, including private schools and home school.

14. As Director of Admissions for TJ, I am responsible for overseeing the admissions process. I ensured that the admissions process followed this requirement in the regulation:

[T]he admission process must use only race-neutral methods that do not seek to achieve any specific racial or ethnic mix, balance, or targets. Candidate name, race, ethnicity, or sex collected on the application form will not be provided to admissions evaluators. Each applicant will be identified to the evaluators only by an applicant number (student ID number for FCPS students; applicant ID number for non-FCPS students).

FCPS Regulation 3355.14.V.A.3.b.

15. This past spring, a total of 3,470 students applied to TJ from 130 different schools (including 13 home-school students). The number of applicants was significantly higher under the new admissions process than in prior years (2,543 students in 2020; 2,771 in 2019; 3,160 in

2018, and 2,902 in 2017). These numbers include students who did not meet the eligibility criteria or who withdrew themselves from the process before offers were made. We saw a 42.19% increase in applications from the 18 FCPS middle schools other than the eight FCPS middle schools that in the past four years have together accounted for 86.53% of FCPS's share of students offered admission.

16. In 2021, under the 1.5%-plan, all 26 middle schools fulfilled their seat allocations with qualified applicants, and all eligible applicants were considered for admission for the approximately 100 seats not allocated to any public middle school. As a result, the students who received offers to join TJ as 9th-graders in 2021, included, for the first time in at least 15 years, students from all 26 public middle schools in Fairfax County.

- a. In 2020, eight of FCPS's 26 middle schools had zero students offered admission to TJ. The eight schools collectively had a total of 11 students offered admission to TJ in the four years prior to 2021 (2017 to 2020).
- b. Another seven middle schools had just one to four students offered admission to TJ in 2020.
- c. Three more middle schools had just five to seven students offered admissions to TJ in 2020.
- d. By contrast, the four middle schools with the highest numbers of students offered admission in 2020, had 82 students (Rachel Carson), 57 students (Longfellow), 33 students (Cooper), and 32 students (Rocky Run).

17. The average GPA (grade point average) of applicants in 2021 increased to its highest level (3.845) in at least 5 years. The mean GPA of admitted students remained virtually

unchanged at 3.953 (3.962 in 2020). Plus, there were some differences in demographics of students admitted in 2021:

- a. In 2021, 25% of students offered admission to TJ came from economically-disadvantaged households. In 2020, less than 1% (0.82%) of students offered admission to TJ had come from economically-disadvantaged households. That proportion had not exceeded 2% in any of the four years prior to 2021.
- b. In 2021, 5.45% of FCPS students offered admission to TJ were English-Language Learners. In 2020, less than 1% (0.62%) of FCPS students offered admission to TJ were English-Language Learners. That proportion had not exceeded 1% in the any of the prior four years (2017-2020).
- c. Students admitted in 2021 also include a greater proportion of females-- 46%-- than in the years past (41.8% in 2020; 42.0% in 2019; 42.8% in 2018; and 40.6% in 2017).

18. I understand that Plaintiff is contending that admission rates for Asian-American applicants dropped by 20 percent in 2021. That is not correct. Asian-American students comprised a smaller proportion of the applicant pool in 2021 (48.59%) than in 2020 (56.08%). While the raw number of applications from Asian-American students increased, that increase was relatively smaller than the jumps in applications from all other racial groups. Moreover, the proportion of admitted students who are Asian-American is still larger than their proportion of the applicant pool: 54.36% of students offered admission; 48.59% of applicants. By comparison, Black, White, and Multi-Racial/Other students continued to comprise smaller proportions of admitted students (7.09%, 22.36%, and 4.91%, respectively) than their proportions of the applicant pool (10.00%, 23.86%, and 6.60%, respectively).

19. I understand that Plaintiff is also contending that four middle schools have been “hardest hit” by the new TJ Admission Process, and is also contending that these four schools—Carson, Kilmer, Longfellow, and Rocky Run—“all” have “large Asian-American populations.” Plaintiff has also described Kilmer and Longfellow as “majority Asian-American.” These statements, too, are incorrect.

- a. All 26 FCPS middle schools had students apply to TJ in numbers that were several multiples of the school’s number of allocated seats, but just seven of 26 FCPS middle schools had more students admitted than their allocated seats. Those schools were led by Carson (31 over allocation), Longfellow (18 over allocation), and Rocky Run (16 over allocation).
- b. Students from Carson, Longfellow, and Rocky Run account for 65 of the 88 (73.86%) unallocated seats that were offered to FCPS students.
- c. FCPS has no “majority Asian-American” middle schools. The demographics of all FCPS schools are publicly available at www.fcps.edu and includes this data for the previous three years.
- d. The proportions of Asian-Americans at Kilmer (25.49%) and Longfellow (27.66%), which Plaintiff describes as “majority Asian-American,” are similar to those at several middle schools that have been historically underrepresented in TJ admissions.
- e. For example, 26.25% of students at Franklin are Asian-American; that school had only six students were offered admission to TJ between 2017 and 2020.
- f. Similarly, 27.88% of students at Liberty are Asian-American; that school had only three students offered admission to TJ between 2017 and 2020.

- g. As another example, Lanier has a student population that is 23.99% Asian-American; that school had only seven students were offered admission to TJ between 2017 and 2020.
 - h. The vast majority (71.24%) of the 299 Asian-American students who received admissions offers in 2021 came from middle schools other than Carson, Kilmer, Longfellow, and Rocky Run. That is a higher proportion than years past (53.52% in 2020; 60% in 2019; 47% in 2018, and 49.05% in 2017).
 - i. The ratio of Asian-American student applications to Asian-American student admissions from Carson, Kilmer, Longfellow, and Rocky Run (5.56:1) is nearly identical to the ratio of Asian-American student applications to Asian-American student admissions from all other schools (5.67:1).
20. It would be impossible for FCPS to revert to using the old TJ admissions process for the 2021-22 school year.
- a. Earlier this year, the vendor that provided two of the three standardized tests that were used from 2017 to 2019—the ACT Aspire Reading and Science exams—announced that it is no longer offering those tests for 8th-grade students. The new products that it is offering are not comparable and would not be suitable for TJ admissions. Among other things, the new products are not secure tests, are not modular, and do not provide the same robustness of assessments provided by the ACT Aspire Reading and Science.
 - b. While the third exam, the Quant-Q, is still being offered by its vendor, TJ admissions have never been based on only a math exam; it has always included a verbal exam portion. Under the previous application process, to advance to the

semi-finalist round, applicants needed to meet certain percentile rankings in each test to move forward in the process. Applicants needed to achieve a 50th percentile in math (Quant-Q), 75th percentile in reading (ACT Aspire: Reading), 75th percentile in science (ACT Aspire: Science) and achieve a higher percentile rank in either math or science of 75th percentile in math or 90th percentile in science.

- c. Selecting new tests to replace the ACT Aspire Reading and Science exams would take many months. When we had to select new standardized tests for TJ admissions for use in Fall 2017, we began the process in May 2016. The process included: (i) research of testing options; (ii) creation of a working group that included members of TJ Admissions Staff, TJ Administration and faculty, FCPS Office of Program Evaluation (now ORSI), Instructional Services - Advanced Academics, Math, Science, middle school principals, representatives from other participating jurisdictions, the Advanced Academics Programs Advisory Committee, and the Fairfax County Association for the Gifted; (iii) multiple meetings of the work group to develop and finalize recommendations; (iv) presentation of recommendations to the School Board; (v) contracting with the selected vendor; and (vi) presentations to families.

21. If the school system were ordered to use an admissions process that requires the Quant-Q exam alone, it would be extremely disruptive and burdensome to the thousands of students who are eligible to apply for admission to TJ this year. These students and their families are expecting the TJ admissions process to follow the process that was decided by the School Board in 2020 and is set forth in FCPS Regulation 3355.14.V.A.3.b, which does not include any standardized testing for admission. To suddenly revert to using a test for which

students have not been preparing would cause hardship and distress to these students and their families. This is especially so when students are still adjusting to a return five days per week of in-person learning after a year of hybrid or virtual instruction that was necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

22. There would also be both a cost factor and a delay factor in using an admissions process that requires applicants to take the Quant-Q test alone.

- a. As for the delay factor, the earliest that we could administer the Quant-Q exam would be in January 2022, assuming we are directed on September 17 to conduct such testing. That time would be needed for opening the application window (which opened on September 2nd in 2019), entering into a sole-source contract with the vendor (because our prior contract has expired), ordering exams, arranging test sites, and recruiting and training exam proctors. Adding the Quant-Q test to the admissions process could also adversely impact the administration of the two qualitative assessments which we have already scheduled to occur in late January 2022. This schedule was posted on our website in July 2021.
- b. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it took weeks of planning and coordination to meet that requirement. In November 2019, for example, FCPS administered the two ACT Aspire tests and the Quant-Q at 16 testing sites, to approximately 2,500 applicants. In the weeks leading up to the exams, counselors at each site recruited teachers and staff to serve as test supervisors, examiners, and proctors. Staff were paid an hourly stipend for this additional work. In November 2019, a total of 196 extra personnel—16 test site supervisors, 120 test examiners, and 60 proctors—were used to administer the tests. While the amount of time for the examination

would be reduced by not administering the ACT Aspire exams, the same number of test sites combined with personnel would be required to administer the Quant-Q exam.

- c. The cost of administering the Quant-Q exam would be approximately \$72,000.

This consists of ordering an estimated 3,000 exams to be administered at a cost of approximately \$39,000 (based on 2019 costs) and \$33,000 for the costs of proctoring the exams in a face-to-face environment (based on our actual costs in 2019).

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on September 9, 2021.



Jeremy Shughart

Attachments:

Exhibit A
Exhibit B

Regulation 3355.13
Superintendent's Office
TJHSST Admissions
Effective 7/18/18

INSTRUCTION

Special Programs

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST)

This regulation supersedes Regulation 3355.12.

I. PURPOSE

To establish TJHSST as a Fairfax County public school and as one of the academic-year regional governor's schools for science and technology.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Sections V.A.1., V.A.3.a., V.A.5.b., and V.A.6.a. have been updated.
- B. Sections V.B.1., V.B.2.a. (4), V.B.3., and V.B.4. have been revised for clarity.
- C. Section VI has been revised to reflect updates in staff titles and department changes.
- D. Section VII.B. has been updated.
- E. Section IX.A. has been updated to reflect new graduation requirements.
- F. Section IX.C. has been revised for clarity.
- G. Section X.B.2. has been revised for clarity.

III. DESIGNATION AS A FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL

TJHSST is a Fairfax County public school, having opened in 1985 under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board. As a Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) institution, all policies and regulations governing FCPS are applicable to TJHSST, with exceptions listed in this regulation and in annual notices issued in connection with this regulation.

IV. DESIGNATION AS AN ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TJHSST is annually designated by the Virginia Department of Education as an academic-year regional governor's school for science and technology. Such

designation:

- A. Provides certain state funding for the operation of the school.
- B. Requires that the school be available to eligible students whose parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) is a full-time resident(s) of, and meets all the residency requirements of, the counties and cities of Northern Virginia under the following provisions:
 - 1. That each of the school divisions decide annually whether or not to participate in the regional school. School divisions choosing to participate are designated as cooperating school divisions.
 - 2. That eligible students from each cooperating school division may apply and be considered for admission to the school. The Division Superintendent may return a student to the cooperating jurisdiction with a prorated share of the tuition reimbursed.
 - 3. That the percentage of students admitted as part of any entering class from any cooperating school division outside Fairfax County will not exceed the percentage represented by that school division's portion of the entire population, as of the end of the last school year, at the grade level for which entrants are being determined.
- C. Requires a cooperative agreement regarding such control and operation of the school, which includes, but is not restricted to, provisions that:
 - 1. The school is a FCPS institution under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board.
 - 2. No regional governing body is created.
 - 3. Superintendents or his or her respective designees from cooperating school divisions so identified may, at their discretion, serve as an advisory group to the Superintendent of FCPS.
 - 4. FCPS will call and conduct meetings of the advisory group defined in Section IV.C.3. above.
 - 5. Each cooperating school division shall pay a per student tuition charge that shall be fixed annually by the cooperative agreement.
 - 6. The nonrefundable tuition paid by cooperating school divisions will be due December 1 of each year for the students from that school division who are enrolled in the school on September 30 of that year.
 - 7. Transportation for students attending TJHSST is the responsibility of, and is at the discretion of, the cooperating school division in which the student resides.

8. A processing fee is required for application to TJHSST. See the current version of Notice 5922, Student Fees.
9. FCPS will provide the necessary forms and materials and staff orientation, as required, and will schedule and conduct requisite examinations, scoring, and reporting of admissions results.

V. STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Each year TJHSST will admit approximately 480 ninth grade students who have committed to an intensive program focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. No twelfth grade students will be admitted; however, tenth or eleventh grade students may be admitted by a placement process. See Section IV.B.

A. Selection of Ninth Grade Students

1. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for admission to the school must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all of the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions throughout the application and decision process. Proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions will be required at the time of application for students enrolled in private schools or homeschooled. Applicants must be enrolled in grade 8 in any private or public school in the academic year preceding the year for which admission is sought. A student may not apply twice as an eighth grader into the ninth grade except in the case of extenuating circumstances. Enrollment in algebra 1 or a higher level mathematics course in grade 8 is a condition of eligibility.

2. Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected using the following criteria:

- a. Aptitude for successful study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- b. Record of exceptional academic achievement.
- c. Commitment, intellectual curiosity, passion, and creativity in the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- d. Background, skills, or experiences that promote the School Board's goal of providing diversity in the student body to enhance a unique learning experience and to develop future leaders.

3. Methods and Instruments of Measurement

- a. Exceptional quantitative skills, interest and aptitude for successful study of

science, technology, engineering and mathematics will be measured by admissions criteria.

- b. Prior exceptional academic achievement will be determined by the grade point average (GPA), which is an average of final marks earned in English, social studies, mathematics, and science in grade 7 and the first quarter marks in English, social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign language, if taken for high school credit, in grade 8, for determination of the semifinalist pool. After the semifinalist pool is established, final marks in grade 7 and first and second quarter in mathematics and science in grade 8 will be calculated for inclusion in the holistic review.
- c. Commitment, intellectual curiosity, passion and creativity in the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics will be determined by:
 - (1) Applicant responses to one essay question.
 - (2) Applicant responses on a student information sheet.
 - (3) Recommendations of one science or mathematics teacher and of one other teacher chosen by the applicant.
- d. Background, skills, or experience that promote the School Board's goal of providing diversity in the student body to enhance a unique learning experience and to develop future leaders will be determined by:
 - (1) Applicant responses to one essay question.
 - (2) Applicant responses on a student information sheet.
 - (3) Recommendations of one science or mathematics teacher and of one other teacher chosen by the applicant.
 - (4) Data from the original applicant's application form.

The admissions committee shall consider all these factors as part of the review process, designed to identify diverse student body consistent with the school's mission.

4. Admissions Calendar

The application deadline dates will be set each year and published in Notice 3355, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Admissions Procedures. The application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the ninth grade will be no later than December 15 of the year preceding the year for which admission is sought. An exception is granted for students who become eligible by virtue of enrollment in a cooperating school division after September 30 of that year; the application deadline for those students will be no later than June 15 immediately preceding the academic year for which admission

is sought. See Section V.A.6.

5. Ninth Grade Admissions Process—Winter Round

The admissions process will be conducted by the admissions office of TJHSST. The admissions process will be completely independent of the TJHSST staff, except that the principal or designated school staff members will provide each year for the admissions office a profile of the last class of ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade successful applicants. This profile, along with other related data, will provide information and recommendations for improvement and refinement of the admissions process.

a. Admissions Process

Eligible students are assisted in making application by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the admissions office.

b. Testing Procedure

The admission examination is administered in late November/early December, with a makeup testing date during the following week of the regular test date or for applicants who require special testing conditions. Test dates and test centers will be set each year and published in Notice 3355.

c. Selection Procedure

- (1) To achieve the annual enrollment objective, a maximum of five percent of the student spaces will be reserved for summer applicants in the summer round of the selection process.
- (2) The GPA and test score will be used to determine semi-finalist status.
- (3) Students not included in the semifinalist pool will be notified as soon as possible after the examination and will receive their test scores at that time.
- (4) Each member of the semifinalist pool must submit a student-authored information sheet, one essay, and provide two teacher recommendations.
- (5) Selection committee members are appointed by the Division Superintendent or his or her designee. Each committee will include school-based and central administration personnel, such as teachers, counselors, or administrators (retired or active), from FCPS or from the cooperating school divisions.
- (6) Applicant notification of the decisions regarding admissions will be no later than April 30 each year.
- (7) The admissions committee shall consider the entire application, including

all these factors, as part of an individualized and holistic review designed to identify a talented, committed, and diverse student body consistent with the school's mission

- (8) A standing committee appointed by the Division Superintendent or his or her designee will be used to make final admissions decisions.

6. Ninth Grade Admissions Process—Summer Round

The procedures for the summer round of admissions are identical to those for the winter round selection process; see Section V.A.5., except that:

- a. Student application materials will be reviewed by the admissions committee, consisting of members who participated in the winter round selection process.
- b. All summer applicants will be notified of the decisions regarding admission no later than July 15. Students on the winter round waiting list will be offered admission at that time, if additional space is available.
- c. Students applying during summer round must have already completed algebra 1 during the eighth grade year.

B. Placement of Tenth and Eleventh Grade Students

Eligible ninth and tenth grade students may be considered for admission as tenth or eleventh grade students respectively at TJHSST if space is available. Spaces available will be determined by the admissions office and the principal, taking into account attrition rates. Applications for admission to the tenth or eleventh grades will not be considered midyear.

1. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for admission to the school must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all of the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions throughout the application and decision process. Proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions will be required at the time of application for students enrolled in private schools or homeschooled. Applicants to grade 10 must be enrolled in grade 9 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Applicants to the eleventh grade must be enrolled in grade 10 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Eligible tenth graders applying to the eleventh grade are those who have not applied previously to TJHSST or those who have just moved to a cooperating school division.

2. Evaluation of Sophomore and Junior Applications

Sophomore and junior applicants are evaluated on the basis of:

- a. Aptitude, achievement, and interest in the study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields evidenced by:
 - (1) A student-authored information and data sheet and essays.
 - (2) Marks in mathematics, science, computer science, English, social studies, foreign language, and technology-related courses.
 - (3) Recommendations from current mathematics teacher, current science teacher, and one other adult chosen by the applicant.
 - (4) Test scores, as deemed appropriate.
- b. Readiness for research, experimentation, or independent study in one of the school's technology laboratories, evidenced by successful science fair projects and/or other experiences, activities, or projects (in or out of school) in science, engineering, computer science, and other areas of technology.

The admissions committee shall consider the entire application, including all these factors, as part of an individualized and holistic review designed to identify a talented, committed, and diverse student body consistent with the school's mission.

3. Credits Required for Grade 10 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the sophomore year is required for those requesting placement into the tenth grade:

English 9	1 credit
World Language	1 credit
Mathematics (Algebra 1, Geometry)	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Health and Physical Education	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

4. Credits Required for Grade 11 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the junior year is required for those requesting placement into the eleventh grade:

English 9 and 10	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Chemistry	1 credit
World Language	1 credit (2 recommended)
Mathematics (Alg. 1, Geom., Alg. 2)	3 credits
Health and Physical Education	2 credits
World History and Geography 2	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

Students accepted into the eleventh grade with all the above credits would still need to take at least 13 additional credits to complete the graduation requirements for the TJHSST diploma. (See Section IX, Graduation Requirements.)

5. Tenth and Eleventh Grade Admission Process

The admissions process for tenth and eleventh grade students will be conducted by the admissions office of TJHSST.

a. Application Calendar

An application deadline for eligible ninth and tenth grade students will be set each year and published in Notice 3355. The application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the tenth or eleventh grade will be no later than June 15 immediately preceding the academic year for which admission is sought.

b. Admissions Process

Eligible students are assisted in making request for placement by the admissions office or by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the admissions office.

c. Selection Procedure

(1) Students' records are reviewed by the admissions office and by a committee of faculty and staff members of TJHSST to determine which students have met all prerequisite courses and educational experience requirements.

(2) All students requesting placement will be notified of decisions by the admissions office no later than July 15 of each year.

VI. Appeals

A. Level 1 Appeal: Application Review

1. After receiving official notice of the admissions decision and within 10 business days of admissions decision announcement, if a parent and/or guardian disagrees with the decision, they may pursue an Application Review. The Application Review will ensure all admissions processes were accurately completed and the decision was correct. This process may include a meeting with the director of admissions and/or the Chief Academic and Equity Officer.
2. The decision of the Level 1 Appeal will be communicated to the parent and/or guardian in writing.

B. Level 2 Appeal: Exceptional Circumstances

1. A Level 2 Appeal form must be submitted within 10 business days after the Level 1 Appeal has been concluded. The Level 2 Appeal form will ask the parent and/or guardian to provide a written explanation of the exceptional circumstance that the Appeals Committee is to consider.
2. The Level 2 Appeal form must be submitted to the TJHSST Admissions Office. The TJHSST Admissions Office will ensure all appeal documents are submitted to the Appeals Committee. The parent and/or guardian is not allowed to submit additional credentials, documents or letters of recommendation.
3. The Appeals Committee will review the appeal.
4. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be communicated to the parent and/or guardian in writing and the Appeals Committee decision shall be final.

VII. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

A. Continuing Residency Requirement

1. A parent and/or legal guardian of an admitted student must complete a residency verification form in order to register the student at TJHSST.
2. A student who is admitted to TJHSST must at all times continue to reside with a parent and/or guardian who is a full-time resident, and meets the residency requirements.

B. Change of Address Within Cooperating School Divisions

1. All changes of address from the time of application through graduation must be reported to the student services office immediately upon change of address. If there is a change of address, a parent and/or legal guardian must complete a new Residency Verification form with the school student services department.
2. If a student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) change their domicile to a location in another cooperating school division, the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) must verify the cooperating school division's percentage has not been exceeded for the student's class at TJHSST before any change of domicile.
3. A student who changes his or her domicile to a cooperating school division that has exceeded its percentage for the student's class at TJHSST may not continue to attend TJHSST.

VIII. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL AND REENTRY

A. Permanent Withdrawal

A student who is enrolled in TJHSST may at any time, with parental permission, voluntarily withdraw from the school and enroll in the public high school that serves the student's residential location or in the private school of his or her choice. A student who voluntarily withdraws from TJHSST during grade 9 is eligible to

reapply for admission to grade 10 at TJHSST, but readmission is not guaranteed. A student who voluntarily withdraws after grade 9 is not eligible to reapply to TJHSST.

B. Temporary Withdrawal

A student enrolled for at least one full academic year in TJHSST may withdraw for only one full academic year and be guaranteed automatic reentry provided all of the three following conditions are met:

1. The student and parents change their domicile to a location outside the boundaries of the cooperating jurisdictions for one full academic year but return to a cooperating school division whose percentage has not been exceeded for the class that the student seeks to reenter prior to reentry.
2. The student obtains (prior to the temporary withdrawal date), from the principal, written approval of the plan for the student's academic program during the withdrawal period.
3. The student successfully completes the proposed academic program and can meet the graduation requirements of TJHSST at the expected time of graduation for the class in which the student was originally enrolled.

IX. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. The requirement for a student to earn a diploma shall be those in effect when the student enters the 9th grade for the first time. The following applies to 9th grade students who enter high school in 2013-14 and beyond.

To graduate from high school with an Advanced Studies Diploma, students shall meet the minimum requirements as outlined below which include 26 credits, 9 of which must be verified credits. A **standard** credit is earned when a student passes a course. A **verified** credit is earned when a student passes a course and the associated end-of-course SOL test. In some cases, student may utilize substitute tests or certifications to earn verified credits. State guidelines prescribe the number of verified credits required for graduation for students entering a Virginia public high school for the first time during tenth grade or after. Consult your school counselor for specific information.

Students receive credit toward graduation for high school courses taken and passed in middle school. These courses count toward credits in the required sequences as well as toward the total number of credits required for graduation and calculation of the grade point average (GPA). **Middle school parents may request that grades for any high school credit-bearing course taken in the middle school be removed from the student's high school transcript, and therefore the student will not earn high school credit for the course. In addition, the student will not be eligible for a verified credit in any course which has been removed from the transcript. The request to remove a course from the transcript must be made in writing to the middle or high school the student will attend the following year prior to the end of the first nine weeks.**

Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50)			
Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits	Jefferson Diploma ¹
English	4	2	4
Mathematics ¹	4	2	4 ⁷
Laboratory Science ²	4	2	4
History and Social Science ³	4	2	4 ⁸
*World Language ⁴	3		3 ⁹
Health and Physical Education	2		2
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Ed.	1		1 ¹⁰
Economics and Personal Finance	1		1
Electives	3		3 ¹¹
Student Selected Test ⁵		1	
Total Credits ⁶	26	9	26

*Foreign Language is designated World Language in FCPS.

1 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include at least three different course selections from among: algebra I, geometry, algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra II. The Board of Education shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

2 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The Board shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Biology, chemistry, physics, and geosystems are required courses for all students.

3 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include U.S. and Virginia history, U.S. and Virginia government, and world history/geography I and world history/geography II. AP world history satisfies the requirement for world history/geography II.

4 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement shall include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

5 A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

6 Students shall successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course, or may be a course required to earn this diploma that is offered online.

7 Does not include algebra I which is required for application and/or admission. Math sequence must terminate in at least AP calculus (AB or BC)

8 World history & geography 2, US/VA history, US/VA government. The fourth social studies requirement can be acquired by any non-AP social studies credit available at TJHSST.

9 Must have three consecutive years of the same language – Footnote #4 does not apply for the TJ Diploma.

10 The credit is earned via design & technology required for all matriculating students.

11 Computer science, senior research/mentorship, & an additional credit in math, science, technology, fine arts, or a fourth consecutive credit in world language must be taken to fulfill these 'elective' credits.

B. Exemption from the TJHSST Diploma Requirement

An enrolled student in the senior year may be granted an exemption, under exceptional circumstances, by the director of student services and the principal, from meeting the requirements for graduation from TJHSST if the student meets local and state requirements for graduation. A student who is granted an exemption from the TJHSST diploma may receive a generic diploma from FCPS and may participate in the TJHSST graduation ceremony.

C. Graduation Credit by Alternate Methods

Alternate methods of earning credit for graduation from TJHSST require approvals, before beginning any study or program, of the director of student services and the principal. Alternate methods must be ones sanctioned by the Virginia Board of Education and Fairfax County School Board directives.

X. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

A. Academic Standards

An enrolled student shall maintain a cumulative B average (unweighted 3.0 grade point average) at the end of each school year in order to remain a student in good standing at TJHSST.

B. Academic Standards Procedure

1. For any student who is experiencing academic difficulty during the school year, TJHSST teachers and staff members will develop and document intervention strategies to help the student be academically successful at TJHSST.
2. At the end of the school year, if the student does not maintain the needed course of studies or fails to maintain a cumulative B average (unweighted 3.0 grade point average), the student may return to his or her base school. When there are exceptional circumstances, the parent can request consideration to the director of student services, the principal, and the regional assistant superintendent or his or her designee.

XI. CURRICULUM

The curriculum for TJHSST includes selected courses prescribed in the FCPS Program of Studies, as well as courses designed to explore new structures and methods in the sciences, technology, mathematics, humanities, and the arts. The curriculum for TJHSST must meet state governor's high school and FCPS academic requirements.

XII. PROGRAM

The eight-period day consists of seven academic classes and one required activity period. Students do not attend each course every day. Flexible scheduling allows all classes to meet for two double periods and one single period each week.

XIII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The extracurricular activities program for TJHSST is the same comprehensive extracurricular activities program, including athletics, as that approved for other high schools in FCPS. Any approved activity will be provided if sufficient student interest and participation exist.

Any student who transfers from TJHSST with no legal change in domicile will be ineligible, according to the Virginia High School League transfer rules, to participate for one semester in Virginia High School League-sanctioned activities of any Virginia high school.

XIV. PERSONNEL AND STAFFING

Staffing and personnel policies for TJHSST that differ from staffing and personnel policies for other Fairfax County public schools include the following:

- A. All instructional staff members will be employed for at least eight hours each working day.
- B. All instructional staff members will receive a salary scale adjustment.
- C. Criteria by which instructional staff members are selected will be determined by the Department of Human Resources with assistance from the administrative staff of TJHSST.

Legal reference: 8 VAC 20-131-110

See also the current version of:

- Notice 3355, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Admissions Procedures
- Notice 5922, Student Fees
- Policy 3355, High School for Science and Technology Notice 5533, Thomas Regulation 2431, Middle School Teacher's Guide: Grading and Reporting to Parents
- Regulation 2460, Requirements for Graduation and Graduation Seals of Achievement

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Regulation 3355.14
Superintendent's Office
TJHSST Admissions
Effective 04/28/2021

INSTRUCTION

Special Programs

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST)

This regulation supersedes Regulation 3355.13.

I. PURPOSE

To establish TJHSST as a Fairfax County public school and as one of the academic-year regional governor's schools for science and technology.

II. SUMMARY OF CHANGES SINCE LAST PUBLICATION

- A. Sections V.A.1., V.A.3.a., V.A.5.b., and V.A.6.a. have been updated.
- B. Sections V.B.1., V.B.2.a. (4), V.B.3., and V.B.4. have been revised for clarity.
- C. Section VI has been revised to reflect updates in staff titles and department changes.
- D. Section VII.B. has been updated.
- E. Section IX.A. has been updated to reflect new graduation requirements.
- F. Section IX.C. has been revised for clarity.
- G. Section X.B.2. has been revised for clarity.

III. DESIGNATION AS A FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL

TJHSST is a Fairfax County public school, having opened in 1985 under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board. As a Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) institution, all policies and regulations governing FCPS are applicable to TJHSST, with exceptions listed in this regulation and in annual notices issued in connection with this regulation.

IV. DESIGNATION AS AN ACADEMIC-YEAR GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TJHSST is annually designated by the Virginia Department of Education as an academic-year regional governor's school for science and technology. Such

designation:

- A. Provides certain state funding for the operation of the school.
- B. Requires that the school be available to eligible students whose parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) is a full-time resident(s) of, and meets all the residency requirements of, the counties and cities of Northern Virginia under the following provisions:
 - 1. That each of the school divisions decide annually whether or not to participate in the regional school. School divisions choosing to participate are designated as cooperating school divisions.
 - 2. That eligible students from each cooperating school division may apply and be considered for admission to the school. The Division Superintendent may return a student to the cooperating jurisdiction with a prorated share of the tuition reimbursed.
- C. Requires a cooperative agreement regarding such control and operation of the school, which includes, but is not restricted to, provisions that:
 - 1. The school is a FCPS institution under the sole direction and control of the Fairfax County School Board.
 - 2. Superintendents or their respective designees from cooperating school divisions may, at their discretion, serve as an advisory group to the Superintendent of FCPS.
 - 3. FCPS will call and conduct meetings of the advisory group defined in Section IV.C.2. above.
 - 4. Each cooperating school division must pay a per student tuition charge that will be fixed annually by the cooperative agreement.
 - 5. The nonrefundable tuition paid by cooperating school divisions will be due December 1 of each year for the students from that school division who are enrolled in the school on September 30 of that year.
 - 6. Transportation for students attending TJHSST is the responsibility of, and is at the discretion of, the cooperating school division in which the student resides.
 - 7. FCPS will provide the necessary forms and materials and staff orientation, as required, and will schedule and conduct requisite examinations, scoring, and reporting of admissions results.

V. STUDENT SELECTION AND ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Each year TJHSST will admit approximately 550 ninth-grade students who have

committed to an intensive program focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. No twelfth-grade students will be admitted; however, tenth or eleventh-grade students may be admitted by a placement process. See Section IV.B.

A. Selection of Ninth-Grade Students

1. Eligibility Requirements

- a. **Residency.** To be eligible for consideration, all applicants for admission to the school must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all of the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions throughout the application and decision process. Applicants enrolled in private school or homeschooled will be required to submit proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions at the time of application. Applicants must be enrolled in grade 8 in any private, homeschool or public school in the academic year preceding the year for which admission is sought. A student may not apply twice as an eighth grader into the ninth grade except in the case of extenuating circumstances.
- b. **Course Prerequisites.** To be eligible for consideration, applicants must be: (1) currently enrolled in, or have previously completed algebra 1, (2) enrolled in a full-year course of honors-level algebra 1 or a higher level honors mathematics course; (3) enrolled in honors science and one additional course or identified as a “Young Scholar”; and (4) have a 3.5 or higher GPA in all four core academic courses (math, science, history/civics, English/language arts and world language if taken for high school credit) at the time of application.

2. Selection Criteria

Applicants will be selected using criteria that consider only the following:

- a. Aptitude for successful study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- b. Record of exceptional academic achievement.
- c. Commitment, intellectual curiosity, passion, and creativity in the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
- d. Background, skills, or experiences that promote 21st Century Skills and develop future leaders; demonstrate the outstanding attributes of a communicator, collaborator, an ethical and global citizen, a creative and critical thinker, and a goal-directed and resilient individual; and qualities that enrich and cultivate diversity to enhance the learning experience for all students.

3. Methods and Instruments of Measurement

(a) In addition to each applicant's academic record, including GPA and coursework, admissions evaluators will consider:

- (1) Applicant responses to one problem-solving essay question.
- (2) Applicant responses on a student portrait sheet.
- (3) Background of educational challenges, specifically whether students are (or were) identified as English language learners, economically disadvantaged, eligible for special education services or attending a historically under-represented public middle school.

A public school is considered historically "underrepresented" if its average number of attending students offered admission to TJHSST based on the previous five years is at least three standard deviations below the school with the highest average number during the same period. For example, based on 9th grade admissions for the five years comprising the Classes of 2019 through 2024, the middle school with the highest five-year average of admitted students averaged 44 admission offers per year. Among all FCPS middle schools, the standard deviation of these five-year averages during the same period was 13. Based on this data, for Class of 2025 admissions, a middle school will be considered "underrepresented" if its average number of students offered admission to the Classes of 2019 through 2024 was five students or less per year (highest average minus three standard deviations, i.e., $44 - (3 \times 13)$). This same approach will be applied to other sending school divisions to identify underrepresented public schools in all participating jurisdictions, except Falls Church City, which has only one middle school. Underrepresented public schools will be identified each year based on the last five years of admissions data. The schools that are considered "underrepresented public middle schools" for that admissions cycle will be identified on the TJHSST admissions site and updated annually.

(b) In accordance with the policy directive of the School Board, the admission process must use only race-neutral methods that do not seek to achieve any specific racial or ethnic mix, balance, or targets. Candidate name, race, ethnicity, or sex collected on the application form will not be provided to admissions evaluators. Each applicant will be identified to the evaluators only by an applicant number (student ID number for FCPS students; applicant ID number for non-FCPS students).

4. Admissions Calendar

The application deadline dates will be set each year and published in Notice 3355, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Admissions Procedures. Starting with applicants for the Class of 2026, the application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the ninth grade will be no later than December 15 of the year preceding the year for which admission is sought. See Section V.A.6.

5. Ninth-Grade Admissions Process—Winter Round

The admissions process will be conducted by the admissions office of TJHSST. The admissions process will be completely independent of the TJHSST staff, except that the principal or designated school staff members will provide each year for the admissions office a profile of the last class of ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade successful applicants. This profile, along with other related data, will provide information and recommendations for improvement and refinement of the admissions process.

(a) Admissions Process

- (1) Students are assisted in making application by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the admissions office.
- (2) Applications are screened for eligibility by admissions staff (See section V.A.1.a & b).
- (3) Students who meet the eligibility criteria are administered short answer and essay exams in a proctored environment (See Notice 3355) [See section V.3.a.(1) & (2)].
- (4) Complete application packets are provided to admissions evaluators. Admissions evaluators are appointed by the Division Superintendent or his or her designee. Evaluators will include school-based and central-administration personnel, such as teachers, counselors, or administrators (retired or active), from FCPS or from the cooperating school divisions.
- (5) Starting with the Class of 2026, Applicant notification of the decisions regarding admissions will be no later than April 30 each year.

(b) Seat Allocation Process. Each public school within Fairfax County and each cooperating school division will be presumptively allocated a number of seats equal to 1.5% of that school's 8th grade student population ("Allocated Seats"). The remainder of seats will not be allocated to any specific public school ("Unallocated Seats"). In the event a school has fewer eligible applicants than its number of Allocated Seats, the difference will be treated as Unallocated Seats.

- (1) Allocated Seats. Applicants attending public school will be first evaluated against other applicants from the same school, and students with the strongest evaluated applications from that school will be offered admission.
- (2) Unallocated Seats. All remaining public school applicants and applicants who do not attend public school in Fairfax County or in a

cooperating division will be considered for the Unallocated Seats, which will be offered to the highest evaluated applicants in that group.

- (c) Admissions Decisions. All applicants will receive a decision on their application; Offer, Waitpool or No Offer.
- (i) **Offer:** Applicants offered admission for the upcoming Fall (9th grade) year must accept or decline by the stated deadline. Accepting the offer means the applicant is choosing to attend TJHSST the next school year. No deferrals are permitted. Students who accept the offer will go through the registration process. Declining the offer means the applicant has decided not to attend TJHSST. The decision to decline the offer is final, and applicants will not be provided with an option to receive the offer at a later date.
 - (ii) **Waitpool:** A waitpool of students will be created to offer additional students an opportunity to attend TJHSST when admitted applicants decline the offer of admission. Offers of admissions to students who have accepted to stay in the waitpool will be provided to the highest evaluated students remaining in the waitpool. Waitpool offers will continue to be made until all seats have been filled or until the beginning of the school year, which occurs first.
 - (iii) **No Offer:** Some applicants will not receive an offer to attend or be included in the waitpool. No Offer applicants are eligible to re-apply for the Sophomore Round of Admissions the following year contingent they maintain eligibility.

B. Placement of Tenth and Eleventh-Grade Students

Eligible ninth and tenth-grade students may be considered for admission as tenth or eleventh grade students respectively at TJHSST, if space is available. Spaces available will be determined by the admissions office and the principal, taking into account attrition rates. Applications for admission to the tenth or eleventh grades will not be considered midyear.

1. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants for admission to the school must reside with a parent and/or legal guardian who is a full-time resident of, and meets all the residency requirements of, one of the cooperating school divisions throughout the application and decision process. Proof of residency in one of the cooperating school divisions will be required at the time of application for students enrolled in private schools or homeschooled. Applicants to grade 10 must be enrolled in grade 9 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Applicants to the eleventh grade must be enrolled in grade 10 in any private or public school during the academic year preceding the year for which admission is requested. Eligible tenth graders applying to the eleventh grade are

those who have not applied previously to TJHSST or those who have just moved to a cooperating school division.

2. Evaluation of Sophomore and Junior Applications

Sophomore and junior applicants are evaluated on the basis of:

- a. Aptitude, achievement, and interest in the study of science, mathematics, computer science, and related technological fields evidenced by:
 - (1) A student-authored information and data sheet and essays.
 - (2) Marks in mathematics, science, computer science, English, social studies, foreign language, and technology-related courses.
 - (3) Recommendations from current mathematics teacher, current science teacher, and one other adult chosen by the applicant.
 - (4) Test scores, as deemed appropriate (optional for Sophomore applicants).
- b. Readiness for research, experimentation, or independent study in one of the school's technology laboratories, evidenced by successful science fair projects and/or other experiences, activities, or projects (in or out of school) in science, engineering, computer science, and other areas of technology.

The admissions committee will consider the entire application, including all these factors, as part of an individualized and holistic review designed to identify a talented, committed, and diverse student body consistent with the school's mission.

- c. The evaluation process will use only race-neutral methods that do not seek to achieve any specific racial or ethnic mix, balance, or targets.

3. Credits Required for Grade 10 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the sophomore year is required for those requesting placement into the tenth grade:

English 9	1 credit
World Language	1 credit
Mathematics (Algebra 1, Geometry)	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Health and Physical Education	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

4. Credits Required for Grade 11 Application

Completion of the following specified graduation credits prior to the beginning of the junior year is required for those requesting placement into the eleventh grade:

English 9 and 10	2 credits
Biology	1 credit
Chemistry	1 credit
World Language	1 credit (2 recommended)
Mathematics (Alg. 1, Geom., Alg. 2)	3 credits
Health and Physical Education	2 credits
World History and Geography 2	1 credit
Elective (Technology preferred)	1 credit

Students accepted into the eleventh grade with all the above credits would still need to take at least 13 additional credits to complete the graduation requirements for the TJHSST diploma. (See Section IX, Graduation Requirements.)

5. Tenth and Eleventh Grade Admission Process

The admissions process for tenth and eleventh grade students will be conducted by the admissions office of TJHSST.

a. Application Calendar

An application deadline for eligible ninth and tenth grade students will be set each year and published in Notice 3355. The application deadline for all eligible students seeking admission to the tenth or eleventh grade will be no later than June 15 immediately preceding the academic year for which admission is sought.

b. Admissions Process

Eligible students are assisted in making request for placement by the admissions office or by a local school counselor designated as that school's official contact with the admissions office.

c. Selection Procedure

- (1) Students' records are reviewed by the admissions office and by a committee of faculty and staff members of TJHSST to determine which students have met all prerequisite courses and educational experience requirements.
- (2) All students requesting placement will be notified of decisions by the admissions office no later than July 15 of each year.

VI. Appeals

A. Exceptional Circumstances Appeal

1. An Exceptional Circumstances Appeal form must be submitted within 10 business days after receiving official notice of the admissions decision. The Appeal form will ask the parent and/or guardian to provide a written explanation of the exceptional

circumstance that the Appeals Committee should consider.

2. The Appeal form must be submitted to the TJHSST Admissions Office. The TJHSST Admissions Office will ensure that all appeal documents are submitted to the Appeals Committee. The parent and/or guardian is not allowed to submit additional credentials, documents, or letters of recommendation.
3. The Appeals Committee will review the appeal.
4. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be communicated to the parent and/or guardian in writing and the Appeals Committee decision is final.

VII. RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

A. Continuing Residency Requirement

1. A parent and/or legal guardian of an admitted student must complete a residency verification form in order to register the student at TJHSST.
2. A student who is admitted to TJHSST must at all times continue to reside with a parent and/or guardian who is a full-time resident and meets the residency requirements.

B. Change of Address Within Cooperating School Divisions

1. All changes of address from the time of application through graduation must be reported to the student services office immediately upon change of address. If there is a change of address, a parent and/or legal guardian must complete a new Residency Verification form with the school student services department.
2. If a student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) change their domicile to a location in another cooperating school division, the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) must verify the cooperating school division's percentage has not been exceeded for the student's class at TJHSST before any change of domicile. Note: This requirement will end with the Class of 2024 (selection process changed for Class of 2025).
3. A student who changes his or her domicile to a cooperating school division that has exceeded its percentage for the student's class at TJHSST may not continue to attend TJHSST. Note: This requirement will end with the Class of 2024 (selection process changed for Class of 2025).

VIII. STUDENT WITHDRAWAL, REENTRY AND DEFERMENT

A. Permanent Withdrawal

A student who is enrolled in TJHSST may at any time, with parental permission, voluntarily withdraw from the school and enroll in the public high school that serves the student's residential location or in the private school of his or her choice. A

student who voluntarily withdraws from TJHSST during grade 9 is eligible to reapply for admission to grade 10 at TJHSST, but readmission is not guaranteed. A student who voluntarily withdraws after grade 9 is not eligible to reapply to TJHSST.

B. Temporary Withdrawal

A student enrolled for at least one full academic year in TJHSST may withdraw for only one full academic year and be guaranteed automatic reentry provided all three following conditions are met:

1. The student and parents change their domicile to a location outside the boundaries of the cooperating jurisdictions for one full academic year but return to a cooperating school division whose percentage has not been exceeded for the class that the student seeks to reenter prior to reentry.
2. The student obtains (prior to the temporary withdrawal date), from the principal, written approval of the plan for the student's academic program during the withdrawal period.
3. The student successfully completes the proposed academic program and can meet the graduation requirements of TJHSST at the expected time of graduation for the class in which the student was originally enrolled.

B. Deferment of Admissions

1. Students who are offered admissions are not permitted to defer the offer. The selection process will continue to offer any open seat to students in the waitpool. Therefore, students who do not accept admission would be required to reapply (if eligible) for the Sophomore Round.

IX. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. The requirements for a student to earn a diploma are those in effect when the student enters the 9th grade for the first time. The following applies to 9th grade students who enter high school in 2013-14 and beyond.

To graduate from high school with an Advanced Studies Diploma, students must meet the minimum requirements as outlined below, which include 26 credits, 9 of which must be verified credits. A **standard** credit is earned when a student passes a course. A **verified** credit is earned when a student passes a course and the associated end-of-course SOL test. In some cases, students may utilize substitute tests or certifications to earn verified credits. State guidelines prescribe the number of verified credits required for graduation for students entering a Virginia public high school for the first time during tenth grade or after. Consult your school counselor for specific information.

Students receive credit toward graduation for high school courses taken and passed in middle school. These courses count toward credits in the required sequences as well as toward the total number of credits required for graduation and calculation of the grade point average (GPA). **Middle school parents may request that grades for any high**

school credit-bearing course taken in the middle school be removed from the student's high school transcript, any removed grades will not earn high school credit for the course. In addition, the student will not be eligible for a verified credit in any course that has been removed from the transcript. The request to remove a course from the transcript must be made in writing to the middle or high school that the student will attend in the next school year no later than nine weeks after that school year begins.

Advanced Studies Diploma Course Requirements (8 VAC 20-131-50)			
Subject Area	Standard Credits	Verified Credits	Jefferson Diploma ¹
English	4	2	4
Mathematics ¹	4	2	4 ⁷
Laboratory Science ²	4	2	4
History and Social Science ³	4	2	4 ⁸
*World Language ⁴	3		3 ⁹
Health and Physical Education	2		2
Fine Arts or Career and Technical Ed.	1		1 ¹⁰
Economics and Personal Finance	1		1
Electives	3		3 ¹¹
Student Selected Test ⁵		1	
Total Credits ⁶	26	9	26

*Foreign Language is designated World Language in FCPS.

1 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will include at least three different course selections from among: algebra I, geometry, algebra II, or other mathematics courses above the level of algebra II. The Board of Education shall approve courses to satisfy this requirement.

2 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will include course selections from at least three different science disciplines from among: earth sciences, biology, chemistry, or physics or completion of the sequence of science courses required for the International Baccalaureate Diploma. The Board will approve courses to satisfy this requirement. Biology, chemistry, physics, and geosystems are required courses for all students.

3 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will include U.S. and Virginia history, U.S. and Virginia government, and world history/geography I and world history/geography II. AP world history satisfies the requirement for world history/geography II.

4 Courses completed to satisfy this requirement will include three years of one language or two years of two languages.

5 A student may utilize additional tests for earning verified credit in computer science, technology, career or technical education, economics, or other areas as prescribed by the Board in 8 VAC 20-131-110.

6 Students must successfully complete one virtual course, which may be a noncredit-bearing course, or may be a course required to earn this diploma that is offered online.

7 Does not include algebra I, which is required for application and/or admission. Math sequence must terminate in at least AP calculus (AB or BC)

8 World history & geography 2, US/VA history, US/VA government. The fourth social studies requirement may be acquired by any non-AP social studies credit available at TJHSST.

9 Must have three consecutive years of the same language – Footnote #4 does not apply for the

TJ Diploma.

10 The credit is earned via design & technology required for all matriculating students.

11 Computer science, senior research/mentorship, and an additional credit in math, science, technology, fine arts, or a fourth consecutive credit in world language must be taken to fulfill these 'elective' credits.

B. Exemption from the TJHSST Diploma Requirement

An enrolled student in the senior year may be granted an exemption, under exceptional circumstances, by the director of student services and the principal, from meeting the requirements for graduation from TJHSST if the student meets local and state requirements for graduation. A student who is granted an exemption from the TJHSST diploma may receive a generic diploma from FCPS and may participate in the TJHSST graduation ceremony.

C. Graduation Credit by Alternate Methods

Alternate methods of earning credit for graduation from TJHSST require approvals, before beginning any study or program, of the director of student services and the principal. Alternate methods must be ones sanctioned by the Virginia Board of Education and Fairfax County School Board directives.

X. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

A. Academic Standards

An enrolled student must maintain a cumulative B average (unweighted 3.0 grade point average) at the end of each school year to remain a student in good standing at TJHSST.

B. Academic Standards Procedure

1. For any student who is experiencing academic difficulty during the school year, TJHSST teachers and staff members will develop and document intervention strategies to help the student be academically successful at TJHSST.
2. At the end of the school year, if the student does not maintain the needed course of studies or fails to maintain a cumulative B average (unweighted 3.0 grade point average), the student may return to his or her base school. When there are exceptional circumstances, the parent may request an exception from the director of student services, the principal, and the regional assistant superintendent or his or her designee.

XI. CURRICULUM

The curriculum for TJHSST includes selected courses prescribed in the FCPS Program of Studies, as well as courses designed to explore new structures and methods in the sciences, technology, mathematics, humanities, and the arts. The curriculum for TJHSST

must meet state governor's high school and FCPS academic requirements.

XII. PROGRAM

The eight-period day consists of seven academic classes and one required activity period. Students do not attend each course every day. Flexible scheduling allows all classes to meet for two double periods and one single period each week.

XIII. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The extracurricular activities program for TJHSST is the same comprehensive extracurricular activities program, including athletics, as that approved for other high schools in FCPS. Any approved activity will be provided if sufficient student interest and participation exist.

Any student who transfers from TJHSST with no legal change in domicile will be ineligible, according to the Virginia High School League transfer rules, to participate for one semester in Virginia High School League-sanctioned activities of any Virginia high school.

XIV. PERSONNEL AND STAFFING

Staffing and personnel policies for TJHSST that differ from staffing and personnel policies for other Fairfax County public schools include the following:

- A. All instructional staff members will be employed for at least eight hours each working day.
- B. All instructional staff members will receive a salary scale adjustment.
- C. Criteria by which instructional staff members are selected will be determined by the Department of Human Resources with assistance from the administrative staff of TJHSST.

Legal reference: 8 VAC 20-131-110

See also the current version of:

Notice 3355, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology
Admissions Procedures

Notice 5922, Student Fees

Policy 3355, High School for Science and Technology Notice 5533, Thomas
Regulation 2431, Middle School Teacher's Guide: Grading and Reporting to
Parents

Regulation 2460, Requirements for Graduation and Graduation Seals of
Achievement

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS